

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Cancel claims 1 and 2 without prejudice.

3. (currently amended) A sequential mail sorting system for generating sort sequence codes, interpreting them for the sequential sorting of mail into a mail carrier walk sequence and providing for holdout mail types, comprising:

- a. reading a sort plan text file for a selected postal delivery zone and determining the number of bins required in the sorting machine;
- b. selecting the carriers whose routes are located in such zone;
- c. generating sort sequence codes for sorting the mail in a sequential order; and
- d. generating sequence codes for holdouts and regular mail types and placing them into a sort plan binary file, and

wherein the step of generating of sort sequence codes includes generating and interpreting sort sequence codes for holdout mail types to allow for sorting and removal of holdout mail from the mail sorting stream in the final sorting pass of a multiple pass sequential mail sort.

4. (presently amended) A sequential mail sorting system [as defined in claim 2,] for generating sort sequence codes, interpreting them for the sequential sorting of mail into a mail carrier walk sequence and providing for holdout mail types, comprising:

a. reading a sort plan text file for a selected postal delivery zone and determining the number of bins required in the sorting machine;  
b. selecting the carriers whose routes are located in such zone;  
c. generating sort sequence codes for sorting the mail in a sequential order; and  
d. generating sequence codes for holdouts and regular mail types and placing them into a sort plan binary file, the generating of sort sequence codes including generating and interpreting sort sequence codes for holdout mail types to allow for sorting and removal of holdout mail from the mail sorting stream in the initial sorting pass of a multiple pass sequential mail sort; and  
wherein the generating of sort sequence codes further includes generating and interpreting sort sequence codes for holdout mail types to allow for sorting and removal of holdout mail from the mail sorting stream in the final sorting pass of a multiple pass sequential mail sort.

5. (presently amended) A sequential mail sorting system as defined in claim [1] 3 further comprising providing a lookup procedure for hashing the sort plan binary file to allow for rapid lookup of the zip code and associated sort sequence codes included in the sort plan, whereby a sorting machine uses the sort sequence code to sort mail into an appropriate bin.

6. (presently amended) A sorting system [as defined in claim 1] for generating sort sequence codes, interpreting them for the sequential sorting of mail into a mail carrier walk sequence and providing for holdout mail types, comprising:

a. reading a sort plan text file for a selected postal delivery zone and determining the number of bins required in the sorting machine;

b. selecting the carriers whose routes are located in such zone;

c. generating sort sequence codes for sorting the mail in a sequential order; and

d. generating sequence codes for holdouts and regular mail types and placing them into a sort plan binary file; and

wherein the system is informed of the pass in which holdouts are to be offloaded and of the holdout special handling categories to be used in the offloading pass, and of the number of sequential sorting passes to be used.

7. (previously amended) A sorting system as defined in claim 4 further comprising providing a lookup procedure for hashing the sort plan binary file to allow for speedy lookup of the zip code and associated sort sequence codes included in the sort plan, whereby a sorting machine uses the sort sequence code to sort mail into an appropriate bin.

Cancel claim 8 without prejudice.

9. (presently amended) A sorting system as defined in claim [1] 6 further

comprising providing a lookup procedure for hashing the sort plan binary file to allow for speedy lookup of the zip code and associated sort sequence codes included in the sort plan, whereby a sorting machine uses the sort sequence code to sort mail into an appropriate bin.

10. (new claim) A sequential mail sorting system as defined in claim 3 further comprising providing a lookup procedure for hashing the sort plan binary file to allow for speedy lookup of the zip code and associated sort sequence codes included in the sort plan, whereby a sorting machine uses the sort sequence code to sort mail into an appropriate bin.